

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CU-02 OES-06
HEW-04 /030 W

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R 270900Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL ISFAHAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 075
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PINS IR
SUBJ: ISFAHAN UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR BECOMES MINISTER OF
SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

1. IRANIAN RADIO ANNOUNCED APPOINTMENT FEB 26, 1977 OF
DR. QASSEM MOTAMEDI AS MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION
REPLACING DR. ABDOLHOOSEIN SAMII. DR. MOTAMEDI HAS BEEN
CHACELLOR OF ISFAHAN UNIVERSITY FOR PAST 10 YEARS. NO SUCCESSOR
HAS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR ISFAHAN UNIVERSITY POST.

2. DR. MOTAMEDI WHO WAS TRAINED IN MEDICINE AND BEGAN HIS
CAREER IN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSUMED HELM OF ISFAHAN UNIVERSITY
NEARLY 10 YEARS AGO WHEN IT WAS AN UNIMPRESSIVE STAGNATING
PROVINCIAL UNIVERSITY LAGGING BADLY BEHIND ITS COMPETITOR IN
SHIRAZ, PAHLAVI UNIVERSITY. DURING MOTAMEDI'S TENURE A MODERN
PARK-LIKE CAMPUS HAS BEEN RECREATED ON DESERT LAND WHICH WAS
HISTORICALLY A GARDEN BELONGING TO THE SAFAVID MONARCHS OF
PERSIA. THE UNIVERSITY, WHILE STILL LAGGING WELL BEHIND PAHLAVI
UNIVERSITY IN PROGRAM BREADTH AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS,
IS GROWING AND MAKING PLANS FOR FUTURE. LIMITING FACTOR
IN ITS PROGRESS IS, ACCORDING TO MOTAMEDI, SCARCITY OF
QUALIFIED FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS, NOT SHORTAGE OF
FUNDS. WITH 18 HOUR DAYS AND A PASSION FOR HORTICULTURAL
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RESULTS SECOND ONLY TO THAT OF THE SHAH, MOTAMEDI IS
PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR MANY OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS. HE
HAS REPUTATION FOR OCCUPYING HIMSELF WITH DETAILS DOWN TO
MOST ROUTINE LEVELS, MAKING ALL DECISIONS PERSONNALLY. DURING
MOST OF HIS STAY IN ISFAHAN, MOTAMEDI HAS BEEN EXPECTED TO
RECEIVE MAJOR GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENT. HE HAS BEEN ADVISOR
AT NATIONAL LEVELS, MOST NOTABLY ON EDUCATION, BUT ON WIDE

RANGE OF OTHER MATTERS AS WELL RESULTING IN PLANE TRIPS TO TEHRAN AS OFTEN AS THREE TIMES PER WEEK IN RECENT YEARS. HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH AFFAIRS OF RASTAKHIZ PARTY SINCE ITS INCEPTION AND WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN UNPLEASANTLY SURPRISED NOT TO BE NAMED HEAD OF PARTY WHEN PRIME MINISTER HOVEYDA GAVE UP THAT POSITION. MOTAMEDI SPEAKS EXCELLENT FRENCH AND ENGLISH (SEE SEPTTEL FOR BIO).

3. ONLY MINUTES AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT AT LUNCH GIVEN BY DEPUTY UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR NAWAB, CONCURRENTLY DEAN OF MEDICAL FACULTY, FOR DR. HOWOWITZ OF GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, MEMBERS OF MEDICAL FACULTY AND CONSUL DISCUSSED IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGE. NAWAB, WHO HAS BEEN DEPUTY CHANCELLOR FOR THREE YEARS, WAS COMPLETELY "UP IN THE AIR". HE HAS PRESUMABLY BEEN GROOMED FOR POSITION OF CHANCELLOR, BUT NOW CONSIDERS HE IS OUT OF A JOB. HE MIGHT BE CALLED TO TEHRAN BY MOTAMEDI. HE MIGHT BE APPOINTED CHANCELLOR IN ISFAHAN OR IF SOMEONE ELSE IS NAMED, NEW CHANCELLOR WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BRING OWN DEPUTY WITH HIM. NEITHER NAWAB NOR HIS AMCIT WIFE PROFESS TO LIKE ANY OF ABOVE POSSIBILITIES AND ARE CONSIDERING RETURNING TO PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTICE AT NEWEST, BEST EQUIPPED ISFAHAN HOSPITAL IN WHICH NAWAB IS ONE OF 17 PARTNERS. CONSUL DOUBTS THAT NAWAB WOULD BE ABLE REFUSE HONOR IF HE WERE NAMED CHANCELLOR.

4. COMMENT: MOTAMEDI HAS DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL PROBLEMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, ENERGY AND POLITICAL CLOUD. IF SIZE OF NEW JOB FORCES HIM TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY, AND IF QUALITY OF SUBORDINATES PERMIT SUCH A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DELEGATION, HE SHOULD PROVE TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE MINISTER. MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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